

## **DHHS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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<b>Section V:</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Safety and Benefits</b>
<b>Chapter:</b>	<b>Accident Investigation Policy</b>
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### **Purpose**

To establish a process for the timely investigation of all accidents resulting in injury or illness to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) employees.

### **Policy**

1. As soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after notification of an occupational accident to a supervised employee, the supervisor shall fully investigate the event to determine the cause and necessary preventive actions. Upon conclusion of the investigation, the supervisor shall document the findings in a written report submitted to the division/facility/school safety director and workers' compensation representative.
2. In the event of a serious accident to any division/facility/school employee, the official in charge shall notify the division/facility/school safety director within 24 hours of notification. The safety director shall fully investigate the accident and document the causes and effects of the accident and include recommendations to prevent the recurrence of such an accident. This report shall be submitted to the division/facility/school director, the affected supervisor(s), and the safety program manager.
3. This policy does not rescind or override any other department policy covering events meeting the definition of serious accident, but shall be implemented in concert with such existing policy, if any.
4. If there is any doubt as to whether an event meets the definition of a serious accident, the division/facility/school safety director shall be immediately notified and shall make a determination.

### **Definitions**

See safety and benefits policy, establishment of the safety and health program, definitions section.

**Serious Accident** - an unforeseen or unplanned event within the normal course of employment which creates one or more of the following:

- A. Death by accident of an employee and/or visitor to the department.
- B. Serious bodily injury to an employee or visitor.
- C. Damage to any structure greater than incidental from an accident resulting in an injury to a department employee.
- D. Damage to more than one (1) room in any department building, greater than incidental or smoke damage, from a fire which involves department employees, whether or not an injury is incurred.

**Serious Bodily Injury** - any injury which severely limits a major life function, which includes but is not limited to:

- A. Dismemberment of a part of the body greater than a finger or toe.
- B. Massive damage to internal organs.
- C. Burns causing permanent damage to the body which results in hospitalization.
- D. Paralysis.
- E. Loss of sight.
- F. Brain damage.

**Accident Site** - the immediate location of the accident, any areas involved in or placed at risk by the accident, and any and all items which may have contributed to that accident.

**Official in Charge** - the highest ranking department official physically at or near the accident site at the time of the accident, or the injured employee's supervisor if no other official is in place.

**Immediately** - within one (1) hour.

## **Implementation**

The safety program manager shall develop general operating procedures for the implementation of this policy. (See DHHS Safety and Benefits Manual, [Establishment of the Safety and Health Program](#) for role and responsibility of the safety program manager.)

The division/facility/school may develop operating procedures specific to its unique needs, which shall at a minimum incorporate the requirements of the general procedures.

Each supervisor shall investigate each reported accident by the requirements of this policy and associated procedures, and shall cooperate fully with the safety director during any serious accident investigation.

Each employee shall cooperate fully with any investigation conducted under this policy.

## References

North Carolina General Statutes: Chapter 143, Article 63, State Employees' Workplace Requirements Program for Safety and Health, 143-582(1), (2), and (5).

North Carolina Administrative Code, 25 NCAC 1N.0105(a).

North Carolina State Employees' Workplace Requirements Program for Safety and Health; Section 2: Policy 2.2: Requirements 2.a. and 5.b; Policy 2-4.

*For questions or clarification on any of the information contained in this policy, please contact [Human Resources](#). For general questions about department-wide policies and procedures, contact the [DHHS Policy Coordinator](#).*